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E.O. 12958: DECL 02/16/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [EAID](#) [NS](#)
SUBJECT: COMMISSION ESTABLISHED TO REVIEW SURINAME'S
ACCESSION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT AND ARTICLE
98

REF: (A) 05 PARAMARIBO 789 (B) 05 PARAMARIBO 828

Classified By: Ambassador Marsha E. Barnes, reasons 1.4 (b)
and (d).

[¶1.](#) (U) On February 9, Minister of Justice and Police Chandrikapersad Santokhi established the 'International Criminal Court Commission.' The commission's main tasks are to advise the Government of Suriname (GOS) on the country's accession to the Statute of Rome; to advise the government on signing an Article 98 with the US; and to adapt Surinamese legislation to encompass crimes such as genocide and war crimes. The establishment of the commission comes in response to Surinamese President Ronald Venetiaan's announcement in an appearance before the National Assembly on December 6 that Suriname intends both to join the International Criminal Court (ICC) and sign an Article 98 agreement with the United States. (See reftels).

[¶2.](#) (U) Attorney General Subhas Punwasi chairs this commission in which officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice and Police are represented. The commission is scheduled to present an interim report of their findings to the Minister at the end of March.

[¶3.](#) (C) Embassy has seen a memo prepared for the President and sent to Minister Santokhi by the President's international affairs adviser, which notes the detriment to U.S. assistance of joining the ICC before signing an Article 98, and therefore encourages serious consideration to signing an Article 98 agreement first. The memo's drafter is serving as an advisor to the newly formed commission.

BARNES